



Spending cuts begin to bite

CONCERN about public spending cuts and the resulting hardship caused to handicapped people is growing day by day.

Questions are being asked in the House of Commons and organisations representing handicapped people are expressing their views in no uncertain terms.

'Short-term economies made in an atmosphere of crisis may lead to fundamentally bad decisions,' warns the Personal Social Services Council, the advisory body to government on personal social services. The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work is worried in case local authorities 'think short-term' and try to save on training provision.

'Voluntary organisations are not and cannot realistically be seen as an alternative welfare state waiting in the wings,' comments Nicholas Hinton of the National Council of Social Service.

It is the National Council's Information Sheet on the Cuts in Public Expenditure which The Spastics Society is using as background material to be made available to its affiliated local groups throughout the country. The senior regional officers are responsible for distributing copies of this invaluable briefing paper which explains in full detail just how the public expenditure system is allocated.

Continued on Page 12

This baby lived—but 1,000 are dying needlessly every year



CAROLINE, the surviving premature twin, comes home after spending the first two months of her life in intensive care at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. Twin brother Stewart was one of the 1,000 babies a year who die because a special care cot cannot be found in time.

Caroline's mother, Mrs Elmer says, 'We agreed to help The Spastics Society in its "Save a Baby" campaign because I would not like other people to suffer because there are not enough facilities for premature babies.'

● The national tragedy of 40,000 baby casualties each year, born either dead or handicapped, was highlighted in the BBC 2 'Man Alive' documentary, 'Will the Baby be Alright' shown on Tuesday, October 23.

ONE thousand British babies are dying unnecessarily every year and many others are surviving to be handicapped for life because of the Government's failure to provide enough intensive care facilities for very sick and very small babies. These tragic facts are revealed in a Spastics Society report, 'No Room at the Inn,' which has been sent to Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services.

If the necessary 305 additional intensive care baby cots were to be made available as a matter of top priority, there could be immense saving to the community purse because of the high cost of caring for the handicapped.

The report accuses successive Governments and Health Authorities of 'lamentably slow' progress in improving neonatal provision, and it points to a massive underestimate of need by the Department of Health. The Department's estimate of 220 cots — less than half The Spastics Society's estimate — is based on out of date knowledge. In a region-by-region inquiry, the report shows acute shortages in the West Midlands, Trent, Wessex, Yorkshire and NE Thames. In England overall, there are at present only 175 cots against a requirement of 480.

The report also states that The Spastics Society has produced considerable evidence that intensive care could prevent cerebral palsy (spasticity). A follow-up study on 165 to 170 babies weighing less than 1,500 grams who were admitted to Hammersmith



Hospital between 1961 and 1970 showed that the incidence of cerebral palsy fell from 10.3 per cent between 1961 and 1964 to nil in the period 1965 to 1970.

The secretary of State called for the report after The Spastics Society revealed the case of premature twin, Caroline Elmer, who was finally admitted to an intensive care baby unit after being turned away from eight hospitals.

Caroline Elmer, now three months old, weighs 5½lb and is home with her parents — thanks to the expert attention received round the clock at the John

Continued on Page 12

Make a date with Naidex

NAIDEX has by now well and truly established for itself a permanent place in the social services calendar. Its popularity and value in the marketing of aids for the disabled is readily shown by the speedy sell-out of exhibition stands for Naidex '79, which promises to be bigger and better than ever.

The theme of this year's conference is 'Disabled People and their place in the Community.'

This year Naidex returns to London and will be held at the Wembley Conference Centre, Empire Way, Wembley, between November 21-23. The opening ceremony will be performed at 11 am by the Duke of Edinburgh who will make an extensive tour of the exhibition hall where The Spastics Society and Newton Aids Ltd have stands.

British Rail is offering concessionary rates of travel between London and any part of the United Kingdom for delegates, exhibitors and visitors to Naidex '79 and anyone wanting to take advantage of the reductions should contact Naidex Conventions Ltd, Temple House, 36 High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1JG, or RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB. There are also cut-price hotel rates; details also available from Naidex Conventions and RADAR.

Making new friends at the Palace



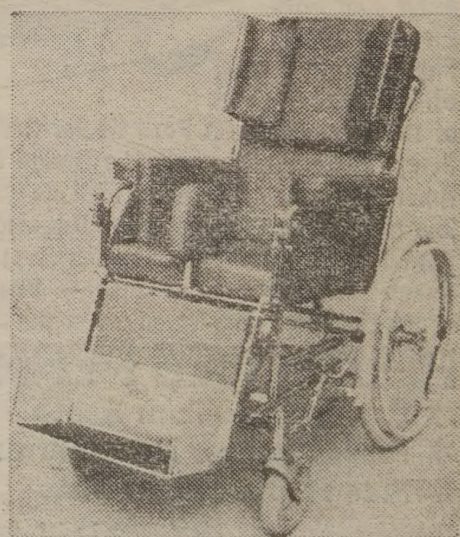
● ALL the Queen's horses at Buckingham Palace come under the hands of farrier Keith Knight, and here Cadogan gets a new pair of shoes watched by Anna Lind, eight, and Teresa Grace, seven, the youngest competitors at the National Spastics Gymkhana, held in the Royal Riding School by permission of Her Majesty. Gymkhana report and another picture on Page 3.

Society's calendar for 1980

TWELVE charming child studies, one for every month of the year, are featured in the 1980 calendar of photographic portraits of children from Spastics Society schools and centres.

The price is £2.39, including postage and packing, and the calendar is obtainable from Ridgeway Publications, the new name for Spastics Cards. The address is still the same as before: The Ridgeway, Iver, Bucks.

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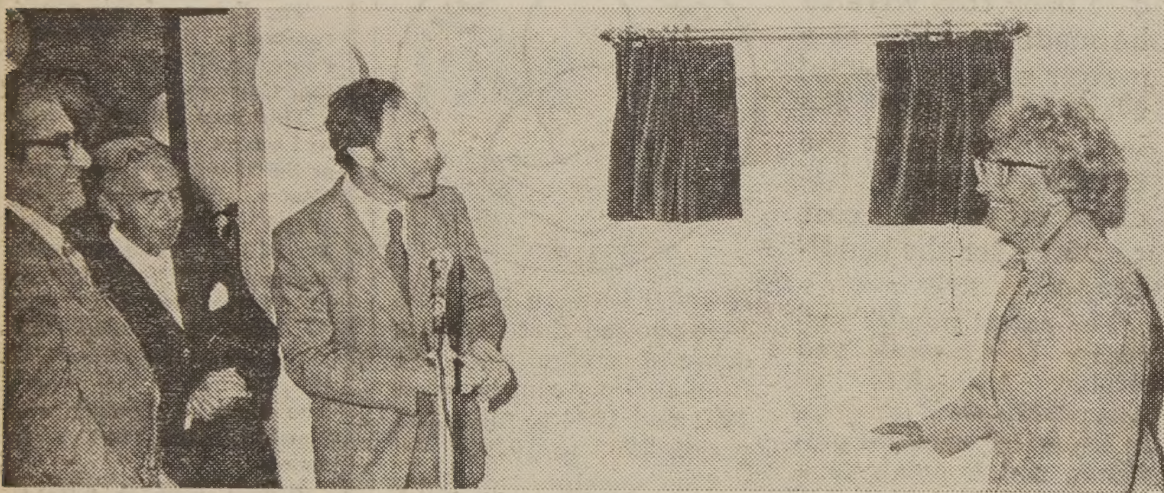
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ABOVE: Mr Dick Thatcher, one of the new hostel's residents, with Mr and Mrs William Burn. Mr Burn is a former Chairman of The Spastics Society and also former Chairman of the Croydon Society. Though they have now moved out of the district Mr and Mrs Burn retain close links with the group. Below: Miss Ruth Garwood unveils a plaque in memory of her sister. Looking on, left to right are, Mr D. Stone, Chairman of the hostel committee, Mr D. Funge Smith, Chairman of the Croydon Society, and Mr Derek Lancaster-Gaye. The Spastics Society's Director of Resources.



Society founder remembered at Croydon hostel

A VISION became reality when the Bishop of Croydon blessed a set of keys to open the front door of the Jean Garwood House at Croydon.

The occasion was the official opening at the end of September of the new residential hostel of the Croydon, Sutton and District Spastics Society, at which the Mayors of both Croydon and Sutton also took part as joint presidents of the group.

Named in memory of the late Jean Garwood, a founder member of The Spastics Society and chairman of the Croydon Society until her untimely death, the hostel will accommodate 11 permanent and one short stay residents.

The hostel is built next door to the Society's adult work centre at Bramley Hill.

South Croydon. The project, long nurtured by Miss Garwood, was brought to fruition after her death by the unremitting hard work of the members of the group, who were able to buy the house next door to the centre when it came up for sale.

With the unstinting help of The Spastics Society, the hostel was designed and built. It opened for occupation in January this year.

Already, under the expert guidance of the wardens Mr and Mrs C. Evans, a happy community atmosphere has developed at the hostel, and the anxieties of some of the elderly parents of spastics have been lessened with the possibility of a real home for their child when they can no longer cope.

JOHN EVE



THE new hostel is officially open, and framed in the doorway are, the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor C. Bowness; the hostel's warden, Mr C. Evans; Mrs Evans, and the Mayor of Sutton, Councillor H. Trevor.



WINDOW ON WALES

by Emlyn Davies

Mobile exhibition to help save babies

ON November 15 a campaign to highlight the need for good antenatal care and a better public health education is to be launched with a reception at Cardiff City Hall.

Outside the main entrance to the hall will be a large, mobile exhibition which is to be staffed by midwives and health visitors from South Glamorgan area health authority and by members of The Spastics Society's own regional staff.

The caravan is a 'mini' version of the very successful

exhibition train which toured the country last year as part of the Society's 'Save a Baby' campaign.

The exhibition will press home the need for good and early antenatal care, and there will be advice on health education, and the need to be vaccinated against German measles.

The mobile exhibition will remain outside the City Hall, Cardiff, until Tuesday, November 20. It will then go on to tour schools in the Cardiff area before moving on to King Square, Barry, and later to health centres and other schools in Cardiff.

Society's medical seminar

A SPASTICS Society-sponsored medical seminar on 'Care Before Birth' will be held at the Welsh National School of Medicine on November 16. A similar seminar last year on the theme 'Foetal Care' raised considerable interest and there is no doubt that with such eminent speakers as Sir Douglas Black, president of the Royal College of Physicians of London, Mr Arthur Wynn, noted international statistician, Professor Gray of the Department of Child Health, Professor Bryan Hibbard and Mr Jim Pearson of the Obstetrics Department, this will be a successful meeting with far reaching implications.

The seminar will be opened by our president, Lord Parry, and will also be addressed by the Director of The Spastics Society, Mr James Loring.

Our regional conference

THE Wales regional conference will be held on Saturday, November 17, at the Park Hotel, Park Place, Cardiff. The conference theme is 'Care before Birth.' More information from the Regional Office of the Society at 45 Park Place, Cardiff.

Young helpers

ONCE again young Alison and Ruth Taylor-Williams have organised a fund-raising event on behalf of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society. This time the girls put on a show in the garage of the Taylor-Williams home and raised £9.

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SN Nov

TOYJOY spreads happiness to children

TOYJOY, the International Year of the Child scheme started jointly by the Toy Libraries Association and The Spastics Society, is now operative in Grimsby.

On November 17, the Mayor of Grimsby will be present at the smart new toy library premises recently opened by the South Humberside Spastics Society. He'll be accepting gifts of unwanted toys following appeals via press, radio and local schools, and if the success of the recent

TOYJOY appeals in Plymouth and Croydon are anything to go by, then South Humberside's handicapped children have a lot to look forward to.

Not only did the tremendous response by the public in Plymouth and Croydon result in a magnificent collection of large items of play equipment, it also produced additional funds through the sale of less suitable toys.

The new shop premises leased to the South Humberside Spastics Society provide an attractive display room for the toy library itself, while a friendly meeting room upstairs is ideal for discussion groups such as the present workshops currently being run by the educational psychologist from the local child guidance clinic.

Fitting out the premises was done with the help of an urban aid grant, with the Regional Co-ordinating Council donating £2,000, and £1,000 coming from the South Humberside

Spastics Society itself.

A lively local branch of Remap has been responsible for making electronic toys, and a good working relationship with government's Community Industry scheme for young people has resulted in the making a prone board plus adjustable table.

The person principally responsible for the toy library is Mrs Edna Coulbeck, who is experimenting with opening times, an important factor in an area where shift work is common.

None of the helpers in the toy library are paid and evening volunteers include staff from the ATC as well as committee members.



PRESENT at the launching of the new home physiotherapy service were Mr A. R. Tapster, The Spastics Society's Regional Social Worker for the North of England, and in the front row, left to right, Physiotherapist Mrs Cornelius, Mrs S. M. Jones, Chairman, Durham County Spastics Society and Mrs A. Todd, Chairman, Durham Area Health Committee.

National Gymkhana at the Palace

ONE of the greatest triumphs enjoyed by a team taking part in the National Spastics Gymkhana was achieved before they even got to the Royal Riding School in Buckingham Palace where it was held.

It was the Isle of Wight team's first ever entry into the event and they made the hour-long crossing from the island without a single case of seasickness despite high winds and high seas. The crossing was so rough that some of the party were splashed by the waves.

None of the children had ever competed off the island before and one of their star riders proved to be 11-year-old Tina Snow. Tina goes to an ordinary school on the island with her twin sister Karen, despite the fact that she is not only spastic but blind as well. Mr Alec Trumble, president of the Island Group of the Riding for the Disabled Association, describes her as 'Very much a natural rider.' She had never taken part in a dressage competition before but rode very well. Instead of being led she depends on people's voices to guide her as she rides. Said Tina:

'I've never been thrown off



yet, and I've been riding since I was eight, but the girth slipped once and I fell off. I never feel nervous riding, though — I find it exciting — I hope my headmaster will let me come again next year'

The gymkhana, organised by Mr A. T. S. Edwards, the Society's Physical Education Adviser, featured a number of firsts this year, including dressage and jumping. Seventy-two riders competed and first off was the dressage event. Peter Felgate, of the Bradbourne Riding and Training Centre at Sevenoaks, Kent, whose horses and staff ensured the success of the gymkhana, said: 'We are trying to upgrade the standard and dressage is

● A BEAMING Pat Putland receives the Pettitt Cup for individual dressage from Lt-Col R. Webbe, Director of the Riding for the Disabled Association.

very popular — people know that Princess Anne does it, and the event here is exactly the same as those at horse trials up and down the country.

Mr Edwards said: 'The standard gets higher every year and so does the interest in the gymkhana. Peter Felgate and I see the riders in action around the country so we know if they are good enough to come. Each team is allowed two riders who have to be led but they must have two who can ride free, which is difficult for some teams.'

Nowhere else in the world is there a gymkhana for spastics and its popularity brings teams from all over the country. Not only are they able to ride competitively, but in between events there is the chance to look round the Mews and the stables, and make friends with some of the Queen's horses, patting on the nose the majestic animals they see taking part in grand State occasions.

The prizes were presented by Lucinda Prior-Palmer, the famous British rider, and Lt-Col R. Webbe. Cobbes Meadow took home both the Pettitt Cup for individual dressage and the Monzani Rose Bowl for the best turned-out team, while the South Bucks team won both the Orange Plaque for jumping and the Roy Monzani Cup for the team prize. Only a single point separated the three top teams; South Bucks scoring 51, Cleveland Spastics Society B team 50, Strang Riding Centre 49, Pendower Hall, Newcastle, 42, Lord Mayor Treloar School 38, Cobbes Meadow Group 33, Isle of Wight Group 29, Valence Special School, Westham, 28, Cleveland Spastics Society A team 25, Thomas DelaRue School 24, and Abbottslea Riders, Bristol, 23.

Army boys win funds battle

ARMY apprentices at the Royal Army Ordnance College at Deepcut, near Camberley, have again broken their record for a one day collection in aid of the White Lodge Centre for spastic children.

This year they raised over £2,000 in four hours bringing their total contributions over the past few years to around £10,000.

Not only do these young men collect much needed cash but they have assisted in many Spastics Society schools throughout the country.

Home therapy scheme

DURHAM County Spastics Society and Durham Area Health Authority have joined forces to provide a community physiotherapist for spastic children in the catchment area of Dryburn Hospital. A substantial grant is being provided by Durham County Spastics Society to cover a two-year trial period, and the service will be closely monitored by representatives from both sides. If the scheme is successful, it is anticipated that Durham AHA will accept full financial res-

pensibility for the service at the end of two years.

The service is intended primarily to provide physiotherapy in the homes of pre-school cerebral palsied children, as it is realised children are more relaxed in their own home, and therefore more receptive to treatment. Parents are also better able to assimilate instruction at home. Other advantages of the scheme are that difficulties of transportation to hospital are eliminated, less time wasted, and the physiotherapist's time more profitably used. Where necessary, however, the physiotherapist will visit certain schools, day nurseries and hospital units.

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THE WEMBLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE, LONDON, ENGLAND. 21st, 22nd, 23rd NOVEMBER, 1979





MR CHARLES Griffiths, of Warrington, receiving a first dividend Spastics Pool cheque for £3,571 from Mary Wilson, lead singer of the most successful all girl

vocal trio, 'The Supremes,' at the Golden Garter, Wythenshawe. Charles, a toolmaker, says he will invest the money for his retirement.

Changes on the way—by request

THE return to a weekly Pool, a maximum first dividend of £10,000, and more cash winners. Just three of the proposals made by the majority of the 1,500 Spastics Pool collectors who took part in a recent survey. The results are similar to the opinions expressed by members, and this overwhelming support for change, has prompted a review of the dividend structure, additional competitions and all benefits related to membership of the Spastics Pool.

From Saturday, November 24, 1979, there will be a total of seven dividends,

Picture left:

GORDON Crowther, secretary and treasurer of the Percy Hedley Centre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, his wife Monica and son Keith were on holiday at nearby Weston-Super-Mare, when they decided to 'pop in' to Westmorland House, the headquarters of the Spastics Pool in Bristol, to see at first hand how the Pool operates. In the picture, Colin Dickson, left, manager of the Computer Suite, can be seen explaining the computer system to Gordon and his family, with Deborah Howard of the Marketing Department looking on.



News about the Spastics Pool

five based on aggregate scores and two on home scores. The first dividend will be £10,000. The new Pool will produce more cash winners every week. Fixed odds will continue as before, giving members even more opportunities of winning a cash prize.

Supporters of the Pool will receive the current Ninetree Gifts catalogue, with an exclusive £2 voucher every three years, for each membership card held. Accident insurance, holiday/travel and photographic services, together with special offers, will continue.

Over £20,000 each week will be donated to The Spastics Society and other registered charitable organisations. Since August 1957, the Pool has raised over £37½ million to aid the less fortunate.

Of the collectors who participated in the survey, 80 per cent preferred a weekly Pool, 78 per cent suggested a maximum £10,000 first dividend, and 80 per cent would like to see more winners of smaller amounts.

'The lost potential we cannot afford'

BRITAIN cannot afford the lost potential created by unnecessarily high perinatal mortality rates, nor, from a humanitarian point of view, should mothers and their damaged children be forced to bear the heartache and frustrations caused by permanent disability.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Scottish Council for Spastics in Edinburgh on October 16, the chairman, Mr George Pollock, an internationally-known orthopaedic surgeon, said the government must be forced to provide through the National Health Service the sophisticated methods of care for mothers at risk and for their threatened babies.

In Denmark and Sweden, reductions in the incidence of cerebral palsy from 2.24 to 1.34 per 1,000 births had been reported and in Edinburgh Dr Keith Brown had also noted a similar 40 per cent reduction locally. There were good grounds for believing that these figures and the incidence of handicap could be reduced still further, it being in the perinatal and post-natal periods that the greatest success in prevention might be expected.

For the mother at risk, prompt emergency care in up-to-date well staffed hospitals and clinics should be available day or night and on demand by telephone. Specialised surgical skill, with every modern provision for resuscitation, are mandatory. It was with facilities such as these that in six years in Paris, the incidence of early labour was reduced from 9.5 per cent

to 3.7 per cent,' said Mr Pollock.

Mr Pollock envisaged the Council's policy as evolving from a purely diagnostic and therapeutic role with widening interests in training schemes for adolescents and young adults, to one in which greater emphasis was placed on research into prevention as well as in the development of more sophisticated methods of training and treatment.

Interested in sport?

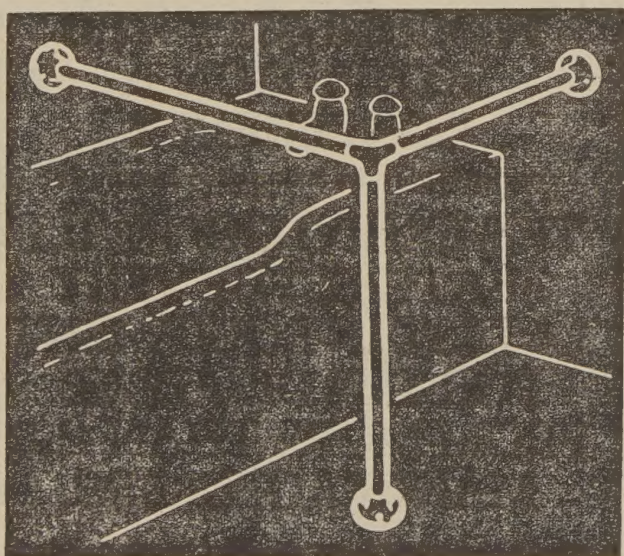
A CEREBRAL Palsied Sports Association has been formed for people who take part in athletics, canoeing, sailing, riding, indoor meets, Scrabble, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair hockey, wheelchair lacrosse, archery, rifle-shooting, weight-lifting, swimming, ground hand-ball or any other activity through the Physical Education Department of The Spastics Society.

Individual membership would be £1.50 per annum, for which members would receive a badge and regular bulletins of events, and news of improvements of event standards or rules.

If you are interested, get in touch with Mr A. T. S. Edwards, Physical Education Adviser, The Spastics Society, Physical Education Department, 8 Starvecrow Close, Tonbridge, Kent. Telephone Tonbridge (0732) 252877.

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For information about other ways in which we can help—with safety and economy hints, for example, or with a choice of ways in which you can spread the cost of your gas more evenly throughout the year—contact your local showroom.

BRITISH GAS



SN Nov

Chairman's appeal to councils on cash cuts

THE Spastics Society is becoming increasingly alarmed by reports of the ways in which the disabled will be affected by cuts in public spending, said Chairman Mr Dorrien Belson, in his speech at the Society's AGM. He appealed to every local authority in the country to make the needs of the disabled one of their priorities when reviewing their spending cuts.

The uncertainty about local authority services for the handicapped in view of the Government's commitment to cut public spending was a "great cause for concern," said Mr Belson.

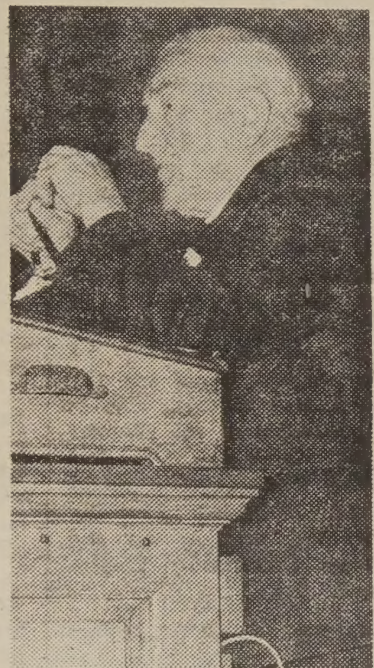
He went on: 'Mr Reg Prentice, the Minister for the Disabled, made it clear that while he expects local authorities to give priority to those most in need, he could not guarantee that disabled people would not be affected, though he hoped that the effect would be minimal. However, we are becoming increasingly alarmed by reports coming in of various ways in which the disabled will indeed be affected, including closures of special schools and day centres, and cutbacks in special vehicles for transport the disabled.'

Another great concern for the Society was inflation, and Mr Belson said: 'Each one of us here must be only too well aware of its effect on our lives. For the Society, with its many deep commitments throughout the country, it has meant that we have been obliged to make some cuts in expenditure.'

'As just one example, from next year onwards it is highly unlikely that we shall engage in any form of capital development unless we go out into the marketplace via a capital appeal and raise money for a specific project. Similarly, for the first time in our history, we have been unable to make provision in our budget for a sum of money to be set aside to help groups develop their services locally, and to aid them in times of crisis. This is just no longer possible. We deeply regret this, particularly

after the splendid way in which so many of them have supported our 'Save a Baby' campaign. Here I would remind you that regional funds, with improved levels of fund-raising, have to some extent taken over the role of the Society in providing finan-

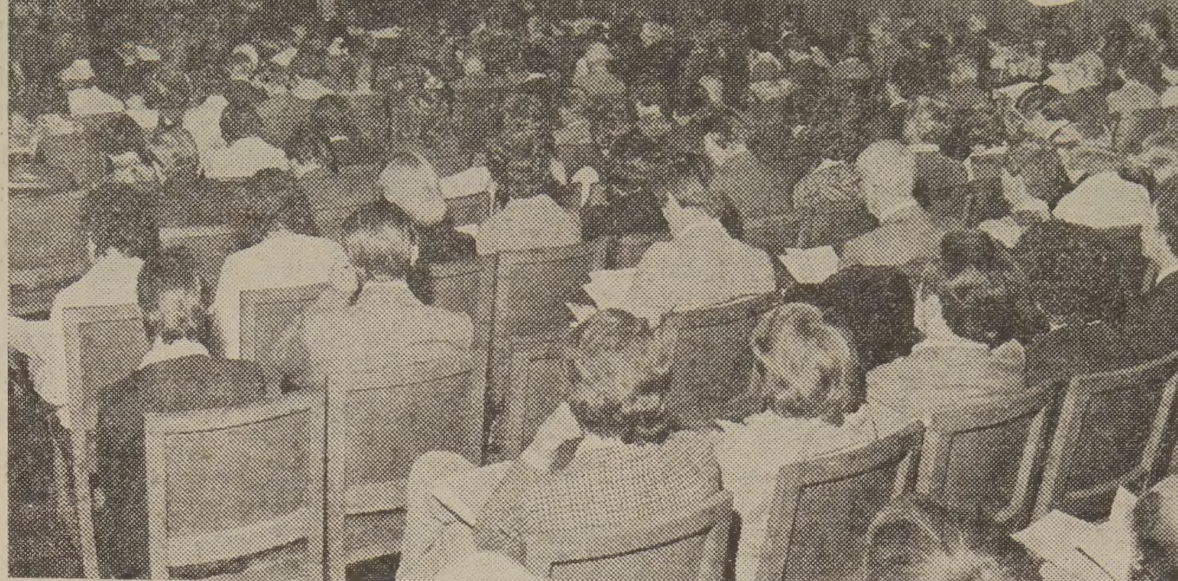
Continued on Page 8



MR George Pollock, internationally-known surgeon and Chairman of the Scottish Council for Spastics, spoke of the close bond between the Council and The Spastics Society when he addressed the Society's AGM.

He traced the growth of the work for spastics in Scotland, which began in 1948 with a small group 'rich in enthusiasm and sympathy, but poor in the snaws of war to fight against comparative ignorance and apathy in high places.' Today the Council provided education, residential care, work opportunities, and a variety of therapy services for approximately one-fifth of Scotland's spastic children and adults so, said Mr Pollock with a nice line in understatement, 'I think we can claim to have been reasonably successful.'

The Society's annual meeting



THE big day in The Spastics Society's year—the annual general meeting. The main hall at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, was packed with delegates from all over the country. Our AGM report begins on this page and continues on pages 6, 7 and 8.

Funds eroded by rising costs and inflation

AGAINST the background of the Society's net deficiency for the financial year of £759,000, there was little comfort for delegates at the AGM from the Society's hon treasurer Mr Iorwerth Thomas.

He explained that investment holdings were down almost £500,000 on the year, and net assets overall down by £193,000. The continuing need to disinvest was worrying.

On the Society's deficit, Mr Thomas said: 'Despite increases in the general level of income, including fees, the costs incurred in carrying out the Society's work has outstripped them, and inflation continues unabated. It is much to be hoped that local authorities, faced with cuts in central government aid, will still be able to continue to use services offered by the Society, for once such a service is allowed to weaken it becomes most difficult to revive in a hostile climate.'

Mr Thomas spoke of the Society's dependence on the Spastics Pool. 'The Pool has once more come to our aid to the extent of some £1,184,000. But this is a declining income source and it has been earned in an uncertain statutory atmosphere. One of the biggest contributions of government to the Society, and similar charities, would be to take a positive practical view of the present legislation on this most vital income source.'

Summarising the financial situation, Mr Thomas said: 'Unless the Society earns a considerable source of income and its centres are adequately

supported by local authorities then it is quite clear that the scope of the Society's operations will have to be trimmed. One cannot keep disinvesting indefinitely or using up assets, and a period of surplus-aimed budgets must be considered over the next few years to replenish depleted investment funds.'

Voluntary groups were warned of the dangers of the same general lack of money at local levels. Mr Thomas

advised: 'Look again at your funding. Be very careful that any expenditure is wisely committed and do not think that your locally controlled Regional Funds will work miracles. There was a time when it could make a major contribution to the local scene. Generally this is not so now. Do not commit capital unless the revenue is secure and use the advice readily available to you from the Society's headquarters.'

Dorrien Belson re-elected Chairman

MR Dorrien Belson was re-elected Chairman of The Spastics Society's Executive Council at the AGM. He has held the office since November, 1973.

Mr Belson is the parent of a spastic son and first became actively involved with the voluntary movement to aid spastic people through his wife's efforts to start a local group in Bath.

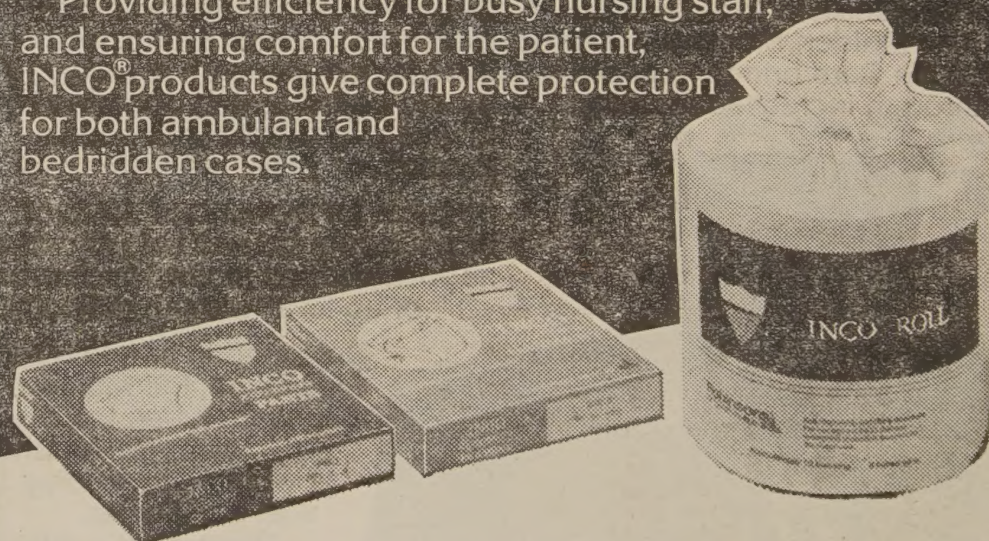
When he moved from Bath to London, he became deeply involved with the work of the national Society. He was first a committee member, then an Executive Council member and then Hon Treasurer before taking over as Chairman.

The Society's new Hon Treasurer is Mr William A. Burn, who is a retired accountant. He has a spastic son.

Mr Burn has been a member of the Society's Executive Council since 1959, and was Chairman of the Executive Council between 1966 and 1973. He was previously Hon Treasurer from 1960 to 1966.

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The Society's Executive Council



THE Spastics Society's Executive Council, photographed together just after the election at the AGM.

Standing back row are: Chairman, Mr Dorrien Belson; Mr H. G. Chappell; Mr I. M. Thomas. Seated centre: Mr W. Huddleston; Mr Alex Moira, Vice-Chairman; Mrs C. E. Williams; Mrs E. M. Milnes; Dr Millicent Regan; Dr Ronald Firman. In the front row: Mrs Joyce Smith, Vice-Chairman; Mr Ian Dawson-Shepherd; Mr P. P. Rigby; Miss Valerie Lang; Mr D. J. Ashcroft; Mr W. A. Burn, Hon Treasurer.

Caring or carping future?



LORD Parry, President of the Wales Council for Spastics, referred in his address to the economic changes which Western democracy had undergone. No government of Britain would ever again be able to provide monies of the sort that we have come to take for granted to subsidise services, he said, and went on to ask some crucial questions.

Are we going to say you can only have a caring society when a great deal of government money is available, he asked. Or are we going to become a carping society increasingly grumbling because we are not able to have sums of money from central or local government that we have come to consider as our right?

The 'Save a Baby' campaign, said Lord Parry, would grow because it was well founded. It was altruistic and valuable on the ethical side and also valuable economically and politically.

'We must stand our ground, we must argue our case, but it must be certain that we are not just crying for the moon and carping for more,' declared Lord Parry.

It was the intercommunication of ideas and facts and figures that would lead us back from a carping to a caring society, argued Lord Parry. We were putting a responsible case for the emphasis of spending to be placed in an area where it would do most good—in saving the children of the future from being born the spastics of the future.

'Little change' Executive election—but success for Valerie Lang

MISS Valerie Lang, a London librarian and an outspoken campaigner on behalf of her fellow handicapped people, has won a seat on The Spastics Society's Executive Council. Eight candidates stood for the five available vacancies, but Miss Lang is the only new face on the council as the four other seats were retained by retiring members who successfully offered themselves for re-election. A third of the

15-strong Council retires by rotation every year.

Miss Lang, a member of the North London Spastics Association, has been a member of the Society's Resources Committee since 1976, and is vice-chairman of its Services sub-committee. She is also chairman of the Consultative Group, a Samaritan Fund trustee, and is involved with the working party on special needs of

handicapped adolescents.

Educated at St Margaret's School, Croydon, she obtained a BSs(Econ) and post graduate diploma in librarianship at London University. She is a member and was variously committee secretary and honorary secretary of the Association of '62 Clubs between 1971 and 1975.

Miss Lang is on the committee of the Uphill Ski Club,

is a member of the International Cerebral Palsy Society and has represented either the '62 Clubs or The Spastics Society at three international conferences. She is herself cerebral palsied.

Also elected were:

Mr Ian Dawson-Shepherd, a civil servant who has a spastic daughter, is a founder member of the Society, was its first chairman, and has been a member of the Executive Council since 1973. He is a member of the Public Relations Committee and Fund-Raising Committee.

He is also on the Board of Governors of Guy's Hospital Medical School, and London University representative on medical selection panels.

Mr Alexandra Moira, a retired architect, of Dorset, was also re-elected a vice-chairman of the Society in addition to his success in the Council election.

Mr Moira, who has a spastic daughter, was one of the four founder members of the Society in 1952, and has been a member of its Executive body ever since.

During his 27 years of voluntary service to the handicapped he has served on most of the Society's committees and is an ex-officio member of every committee appointed by the executive.

He has been vice-chairman of the Executive Council since 1960 and is an elected member of the Management Board and chairman of the Resources Committee. He is a trustee of Friends of Spastics League, a trustee of Charity Cards and a trustee of the Sembal Trust, chairman of the Habinteg Housing Association and a member of the International Cerebral Palsy Society.

Mrs Joyce Smith, a fireless worker for the disabled, was also re-elected a vice-chairman after retaining her Executive Council seat.

Mrs Smith, a magistrate, who lives in Wiltshire, has served on the Council since 1971, and has been a vice-chairman since 1974. She is a member of the Management Board, Resources Committee and chairman of the Public Relations and Fund-Raising

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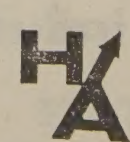


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FOUR of the Society's senior regional officers pictured during the lunch break at the AGM. From left: Judith Barnett, London Region; Mike Venables, Midlands; Charmian Mould, West; and Cyril Cattell, East Region.



MRS JOYCE Smith was re-elected to the Executive Council and also as a vice-chairman of the Society at the AGM. She's pictured left with journalist Kay Christiansen, the Society's Head of Information.



THE lunchtime break provided an opportunity for teacher talk amongst members of The Spastics Society educational staff. Pictured are Mrs Maureen Fowler, head of Craig y Parc School; Mrs Betty Adams, education officer and Mrs Rita Hyam, head of Meldreth Manor.



MR J. O'CONNELL of the Wigan and District Spastics Society with Commander Archie Cameron, Director of the Scottish Council for Spastics.



MRS ALICE Rowland of the Aberconwy Group exchanges a few friendly words with Mr V. G. Lawrence, Secretary of the Leicester and District Spastics Society.



A MEETING at the AGM for two staunch volunteers from the West Country, Mrs Rachel Brenton of the Plymouth and South West Devon Spastics and Mrs Kay Vranich, of the Devon and Exeter Society.

Lively question time

QUESTION time from the floor to the Society's panel of experts at this year's AGM was as lively a session as ever, covering a wide ranging variety of issues raised by group members.

General applause greeted Mr Bentley of the Midlands Spastics Association when he asked was it not time to shift emphasis to the adult? Mr Derek Lancaster-Gaye, Director of Resources, commented in reply that in fact the Society did spend more money on adult provision, but he took Mr Bentley's point concerning consultation which was not always an easy procedure. Ms Valerie Lang, replying in her role of newly elected member of the Executive Council, said she looked forward to the time when the voice of the young handicapped person would be an integral part of planning procedure, a remark which won a further round of applause. Answering Mr Bentley's point about integrating spastics into society, Mr

Lancaster-Gaye as well as Mr Alex Moira, a vice-chairman of the Society, quoted the example of pilot work done by the Society such as the Milton Keynes housing project, which was based on consultations with Society residents.

A tremendous job lay ahead for the groups in communicating with local authorities, Mr Moira told Mrs Brenton of the Plymouth and SW Devon group who was concerned about the future continuation of local groups. Relationships between groups and local authorities had improved year by year over the past 10 years, said Mr Tony Frank, Assistant Director, Regions, who added that their role was no less exciting and exacting as when they first started. It was largely as a result of the work of societies and groups that a wide range of services, such as assessment clinics, playgroups, etc, were now provided. It may be time now for some groups to turn to an enabling role, and some had already set up information services to help parents who were bewildered by the variety of

benefits available. Another role for groups was to highlight inadequate provision, and to provide extra amenities to bring services up to standard.

Mr Frank said that the child population in subnormality hospitals was dwindling, but there were still adults needing help and care, and surely local groups could contribute here?

In answer to the inquiry from Mr Ffoulkes (Chesterfield and District Spastics Society) concerning services for severely handicapped young people who were also mentally retarded, Miss Margaret Morgan, Controller of Personal Social Services, advised groups to ask their local social services departments what they were planning for this group, because they were vulnerable people and it was important they received appropriate services.

Outlining Spastics Society provision, Mr Richard Grey, Controller of Schools and Centres, told members about the unit at the Douglas Arter Centre in Salisbury with its 24 day and eight residential places.

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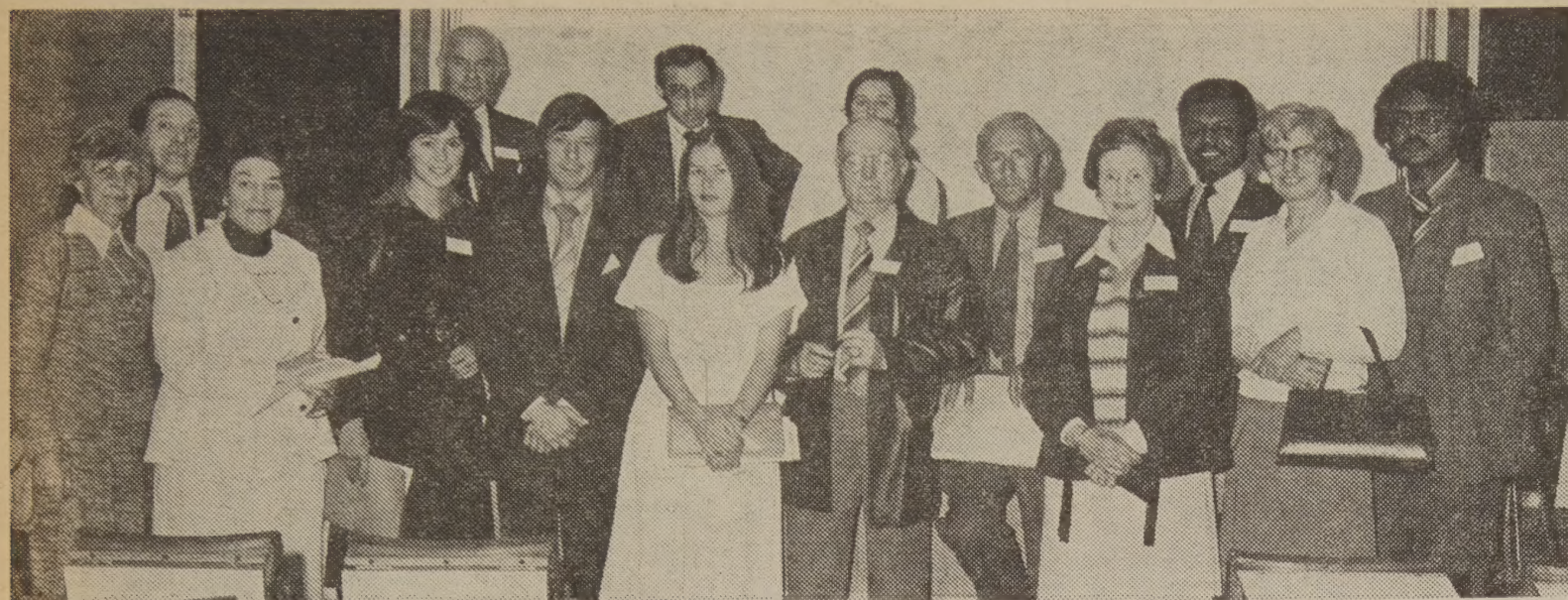
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GROUP members who assisted in the counting of the votes included Mr J. H. Gamble from Basingstoke and District Spastics Society; Mrs Betty Bowen from Colwyn Bay and District; Mr M. J. H. Sayers from Goole and District; Mr F. A. R. Brusby from Pontefract and District; Mrs I. E. Davies from Pontypridd and District and Mrs D. Till from Worthing, Littlehampton and District Spastics Society.

AGM: The Chairman's appeal

Continued from Page 5

cial help to the groups. But such funds have cash limits, too. The message I must give you, therefore, is that each individual group must raise more money to provide for both present services and any services or projects it plans for the future... just as the Society itself must do so.

Mr Belson said that the past year had been one of the most eventful in the Society's history. The Executive Council has been mainly concerned with the continuation of the 'Save a Baby' campaign; with sustaining pressure on government to improve the maternity services; and with the ever-increasing problems of trying to use resources to the best advantage of those for whom the Society was founded.

The campaign was born in the belief that the incidence of death and handicap suf-

fered by Britain's babies could be drastically reduced, and Mr Belson detailed the progress of the campaign so far. The second phase has been mainly concerned with care before birth and the Society had urged that every effort should be made to encourage women to receive early antenatal care and that action must be taken to improve the quality of care. The Society had also urged the government to improve services for mothers and babies.

'This year has also seen a change to a government committed to cut-backs in public spending. How then can they be persuaded to improve our country's maternity services? They have surely only to look at the enormous cost of handicap to the community to see that it is sound economic sense to spend more on creating conditions in which the incidence of handicap can be

substantially reduced, in order to avoid the much larger and ever-increasing sums needed to cater for the handicapped.'

Mr Belson said that while the Society had been greatly concerned with the problem of needless handicap, it had not been deflected in any way from a continuing commitment to the welfare of spastic men, women and children in this country, and he detailed some of the improvements that had been made at centres, and the ways in which handicapped people had been helped to integrate into the community.

Other points from the Chairman's speech...

Volunteers: 'It is always encouraging to note the large number of people of all ages who are prepared year after year to devote some of their time to helping in the work of the Society in a purely voluntary capacity. I sometimes

wonder if the Society ever really succeeds in expressing its thanks to them for their efforts. Although there are those — the vast majority, I suspect, who seek neither thanks nor recognition I would say now that the Society could not continue without you and that we do indeed appreciate all you have done — are still doing.'

Education: 'The Society has been concerned at the decreasing number of children attending its residential schools. This may be partly due to the Warnock Report and its recommendation that wherever possible handicapped children should be educated in normal schools. However good this idea may be, we are convinced that there will always be a need for special residential schools for the education of some severely handicapped children.'

'While demand is decreasing in this sphere, the need for further education facilities for handicapped adolescents is increasing. There is no doubt that enormous benefits accrue for handicapped school leavers if they are able to have a further year or two learning the specialised skills they need to enter adult life.'

The future: 'The United Nations has formally declared 1981 as the International Year for the Disabled. The objectives of this year include help to disabled people in their physical and psychological adjustment, the promotion of proper assistance, training, care and guidance, the encouragement of research and study projects, public education and the promotion of measures in support of the prevention of handicap.'

'Such a concentration of effort on behalf of the disabled throughout the world could bring immeasurable benefits and the Society intends to participate actively. Plans are now being formulated at headquarters and it is hoped that local groups will take full advantage of this important year to further their work in improving the lives of handicapped people in their own communities.'



THE Society's Director James Loring pictured with his wife Anita, both obviously enjoying the AGM. Mr Loring is also President of the International Cerebral Palsy Society, and Mrs Loring is ICPS Secretary.



THERE was a warm welcome at the pre-AGM reception from Executive Council member Mr Ian Dawson-Shepherd and his daughter Rosemary for a visitor from half a world away — Senora Gloria Piccone de Heller, President of the Asociacion Grupo Acuario, which helps mentally handicapped spastics children in Lima, Peru.

Senora Heller has two severely handicapped grown-up daughters back in Peru, while her eldest daughter Gloriana (left), who works in London at the Peruvian Embassy, acted as interpreter during her mother's visit to Spastics Society centres. But none of the group members who met Senora Heller needed an interpreter to appreciate her fund-raising message. 'Multi enthusiasm' declared Senora Heller, and everyone agreed.

Loss for Southampton

MRS Marjorie Clayton, officer in charge of the Southampton Family Help Unit, has died suddenly at the age of 58. She successfully recovered from an operation for cancer two years earlier, and was in good health when she suffered a stroke from which she never regained consciousness.

Mrs Clayton had been in charge of the unit for four years and prior to that had been the relief sister. She leaves two sons, Robert aged 21, and Malcolm 20, and a spastic adopted daughter, Sharon, aged 16. Mrs Clayton was a widow, her husband having died two years previously.

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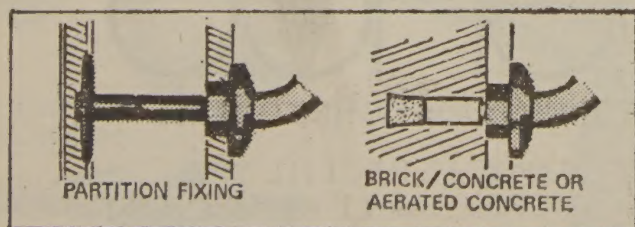
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Christy's triumph

THIS month we continue the absorbing, poignant and dramatic story of Christy Nolan, the spastic boy who could have been written off as a vegetable — until a wonder drug helped reveal that his crippled body contained the spirit of genius. Last month's issue concentrated on Christy's successful integration into an ordinary Dublin comprehensive school. Now, for the first time in detail, **Spastics News** tells the story of Christy and his amazing literary gifts.

After 11 years — the dramatic breakthrough

A LETTER dated August 11, 1977, marks the breakthrough of Christy Nolan.

Before that there had been 11 long years when he could only communicate by grunts and the look in his eyes. Unlike many mothers, Mrs Nolan was prepared for her son to be handicapped because of his asphyxiation at birth. Each time she visited the Central Remedial Clinic in Dublin with him she would give the same report: 'Physically — no progress; intellectually — perfect.'

The family moved from their country farm to a house near the clinic. And from time to time, Christy's father Joseph recalls, there would be hope of a breakthrough, such as Christy would walk, but always it came to nothing. They tried getting him to use a

typewriter 'But,' says Mrs Nolan, 'I had given up. Watching him at the typewriter and getting in a most desperate state was too much and I put it away.'

It was a drug that made the difference to Christy as Dr Keiran Barry, of the Central Remedial Clinic, Dublin, explained: 'Liore-sal is quite a well-known drug and it was prescribed purely to make nursing easier—it is an anti-spastic drug. We gradually built up from homeopathic doses of ¼ tablet three times a day till we got to 2 ½ tablets a day and Christy started pouring forth all that was stored in his head. We all knew he was bright, we had known him since he was a tiny baby but we had never expected this. It was an extraordinary thing to happen.'

When the dosage was found to relax Christy's spasms it was suggested that he tried typing again. He refused. The next week at the clinic they asked him how he had got on. His mother would not help him out and he had to confess by grunts and abashed



● THE touch that tells all — Bernadette Nolan cradles Christy's chin in the gentle support that has enabled him to type out the words of his brilliant poetry and prose. He presses the keys with the pointer strapped to his head.

looks that he had not tried.

Back home Mrs Nolan asked him to try again and he agreed to write a letter to his Aunt Kathleen. Supporting his chin with her hand, Mrs Nolan guided his typing and slowly Christy began a letter indistinguishable from that of any 11-year-old. The first few phrases are totally ordinary but could still be considered special since it was the first proof that Christy was intelligent. Then Mrs Nolan suddenly felt that she should let Christy type what he wanted. As the words appeared at huge effort she felt a tremor of fear run down her spine.

Dear Aunt Kathleen.— Hope you are well. The school has closed for holidays. How is Uncle Joe and Pat Curly. I spent a lovely holiday in Clare. I enjoyed myself very much. One day we went to visit a lovely cave. It was called Ailwee Cave there was a bear found embedded in the rock it had been there at least one thousand and six hundred years. ELECTRIC LIGHTS LIT THE CAVE IN BLUE AND RED AND REFLECTED IN THE STALAGMITES AND STALACTITES GIVING A LOVELY FAIRY LIKE EFFECT TO THE WORK OF NATURE. It is wonderful to be able to write to you love Christy.

Mrs Nolan was electrified. She hugged Christy until, unable to contain herself she rushed outside to tell a neighbour. 'Look, look at the letter my little boy's just written.' The neighbour was new and although she knew Mrs Nolan's boy was handicapped had no idea of what this meant. She replied how nice it was and went on to talk about her family. Inside the kitchen Christy's heart was thumping so much that spasms threatened to throw him out of his chair. He felt as if his heart would break, at last, he last he could communicate and here was his

mother outside chatting to a neighbour. He told her afterwards that he would never, never forgive her for leaving him at the greatest moment of his life.

Since then Christy has gone on to produce prose and poetry which has quite literally stunned people. His surrealistic style and massive vocabulary seems scarcely believable. It baffles his father. 'People say he must get his words

Continued on Page 10

CHRISTY says this poem is meant to describe himself to others. He writes: 'My mam and' dad understood my lonely, lost life as no one else could.'

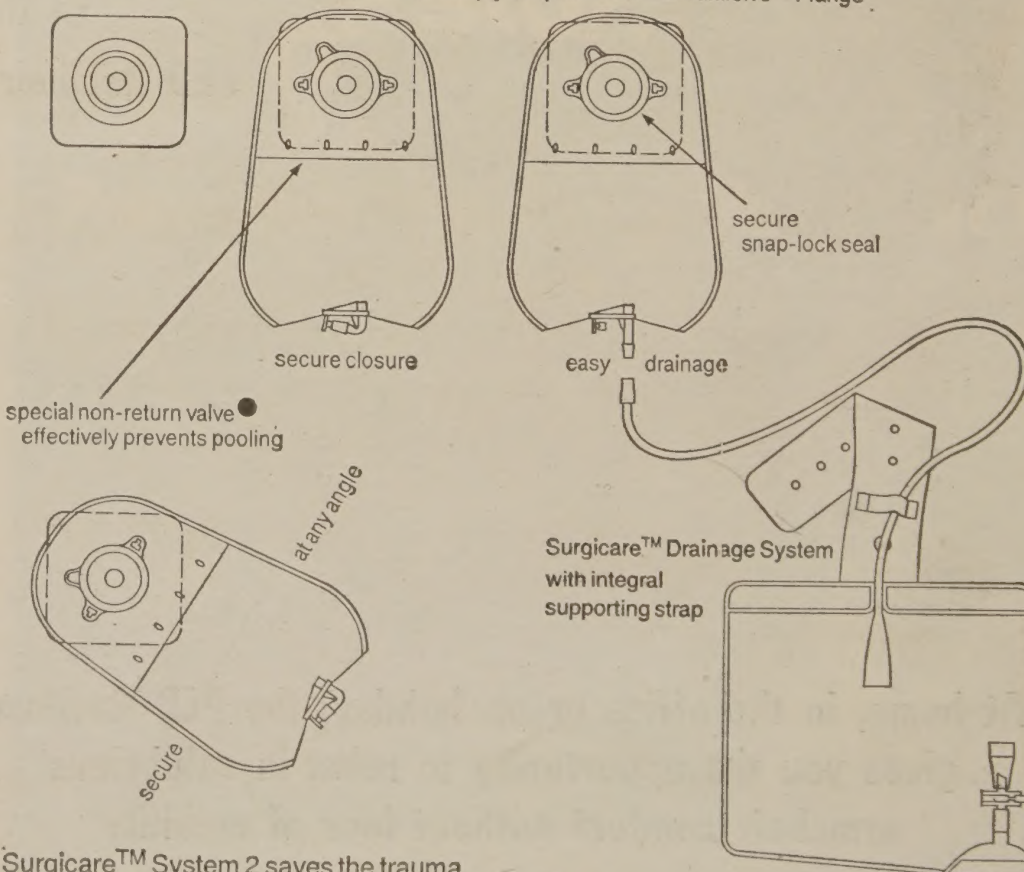
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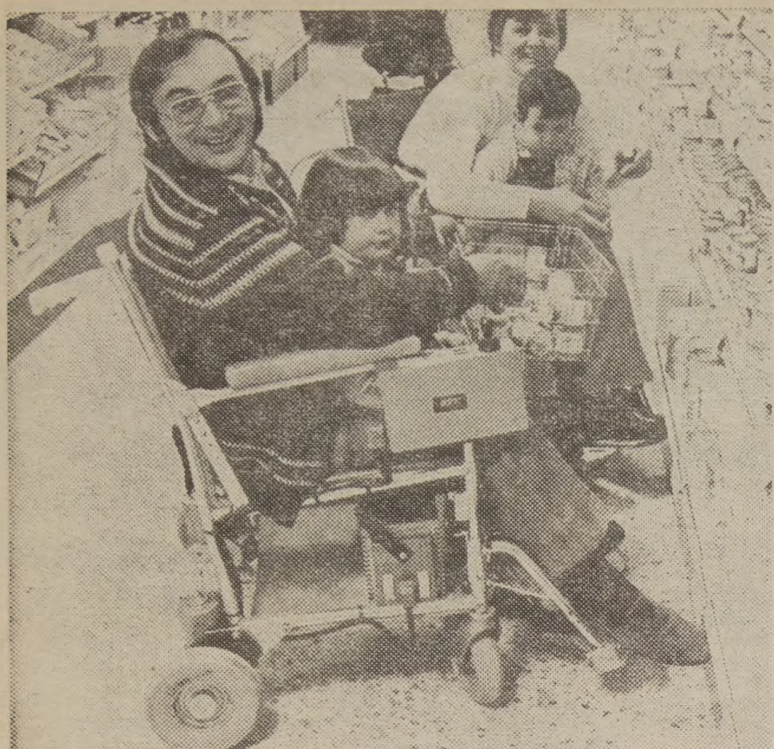
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Will other shopping centres please copy?

SUE Yelland is a spastic, husband John a polio victim, and shopping with two lively children, three-year-old Sally and Matthew, eight months, has been hard work in the past. Now shopping is no longer a nightmare for the Yelland family from Milton Keynes, thanks to an imaginative scheme which provides the use of free battery-operated wheelchairs for use in the shopping complex.

The new £40m covered shopping complex in Milton Keynes, the newest and largest in Europe, was opened by Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher in

October and was designed with access for the disabled very much in mind. There are wide aisles and check-outs specially intended for wheelchairs.

The 'Shopmobility' scheme consists of 12 battery-operated wheelchairs, some provided by the shops themselves, others by local businessmen and charities. The chairs are bookable in advance on a 24-hour answerphone service.

The scheme is proving so successful that disabled people are driving for up to one and a half hours in order to do their shopping at the centre.

Our bravest children

JUST one month still to go before the final closing date on Saturday, December 1, and nominations for The Spastics Society's 1979 Achievement Award are already coming in from parents, relatives and professional care staff, anyone in fact who knows of a child who might be eligible.

The International Year of the Child made 1979 particularly appropriate for the annual Achievement Award to focus on children, and the citation reads... 'for the bravest or most outstanding effort or achievement in any field by child-

ren who have been handicapped since birth or who have suffered handicap by the age of five years.'

The first prize is £250, plus a silver cup which the winning child can keep; second prize is £50 and the third prize £25. All finalists will be presented with an inscribed medal.

Nominated children should be between the ages of five-16, and suffering from any handicap.

Nomination forms are available from Mrs Nina Heycock, 27/33 Harrington Gardens, London SW7 4JT.

Christy's triumph

Continued from Page 9

from radio and television but I never hear the words he uses coming from the TV set.' His mother laughs and says: 'I should be a genius at English when I finish with him' and half-seriously 'One day I would like to write a book simply to show how different our styles are.'

Ordeal

From time to time people find it impossible to equate the writing they read with the child in the wheelchair. Mrs Nolan says nothing but sets up the typewriter, and Christy sets to work. 'And I can tell you that when they see what they have made the child do—what an ordeal it is for him—all that effort just to give them proof, they go away shattered and very, very ashamed.'

On a bad day, Christy might only be able to produce five words, on a good one 30, and on one never to be forgotten occasion, 260. 'We worked from 11.30 in the morning till 9.30 at night with just breaks for meals and I can tell you we were exhausted, absolutely drained.' They have worked out a special code which Mrs Nolan has transcribed into a notebook just in case anything should happen to her. 'A' is indicated when he looks straight into her face, for instance, and an 'X' by puckering up his lips in a kiss shape. If Mrs Nolan hasn't caught the letter exactly and it is a 'T' he will glance at the tea-pot to give her a clue. And boldly underscored in the notebook are the words: 'AT NO TIME DO YOU HELP IN HIS THINKING.'

Awards

Christy has won two literary awards in The Spastics Society's annual literary competition, his autobiography 'A Mammy Encomium' is to be filmed by the BBC and is en route to a publisher's but none of this is important to Mrs Nolan.

'Christy tells me that what he has written so far is just the tip of the iceberg. He's already writing his second book and working on a play but I don't give a damn whether his work is published or not.'

The only thing that matters is that he gets it out of himself.

'I don't worry about the future—if you could have seen Christy's face when the breakthrough came you would have known that there was nothing to fear ever again. Of course it is exhausting but I would do anything, anything in my power to prevent other Christys being put into an institution because their families believed nothing could be done for them. I know how near I was missing it in Christy.'

Choice

'Once I asked him if he had been given the choice which he would rather, to have died at birth after his baptism and gone straight to Heaven to be one of the angels with nothing wrong with him or to be like he is, crippled and in a wheelchair for the rest of his life, and he said "Wheelchair".'

In one of his pieces Christy wrote: 'People asked me for a reason for living as dogs leaped across my paralysed limbs and sadly I said—do not ask for food from a starving man.'

Mrs Nolan has collected all his works in an album and between the writings, that some have likened to James Joyce and others to W. B. Yeats, are letters and notes typical of a boy of his age.

If Christy had not been born handicapped what would he be doing is a question that Mrs Nolan has put to Christy. He pointed out into the garden where a chimney towers over a shed and said: 'I wouldn't be stuck at a typewriter—I'd be climbing up that.'

Liz Cook

Obituary Leading members of SOS

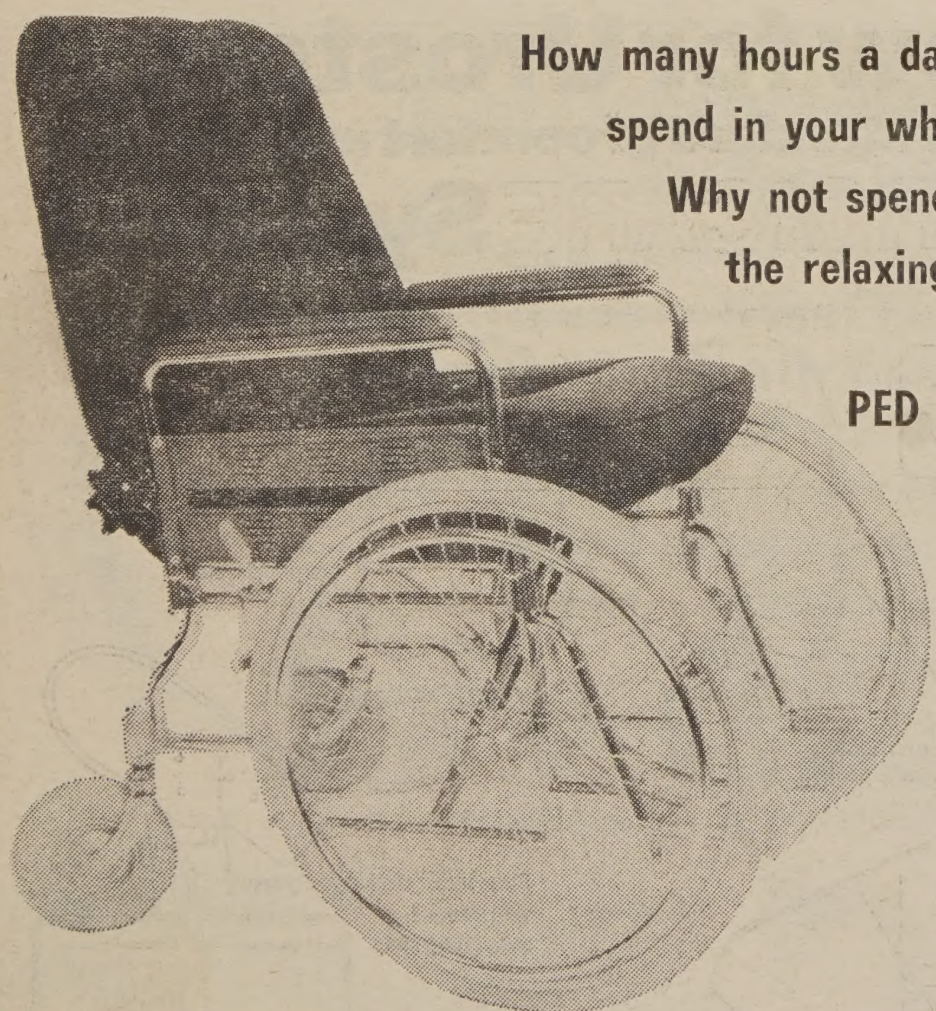
THE Stars Organisation for Spastics has been saddened by the recent deaths of two leading members.

Norrie Paramour had been a long standing member of SOS and was on the Management Committee of Wakes Hall Residential Centre for two years. He was a noted musical director in the world of entertainment. Mrs Sheila Rawstone, SOS Director, said: 'He was particularly helpful to the SOS when it came to our annual carol concert, providing special arrangements for the artists taking part. His death came as a great shock.'

Leslie Grade was honorary treasurer to SOS during its years of greatest expansion. The Countess of Westmorland, SOS president at the time, said in tribute: 'He gave so much of his time and help when it was needed, but even more, his advice and strong moral support which was something for which we will always be grateful.'

Mrs Rawstone said that Mr Grade was tremendously generous and it is estimated that Mr Grade raised £50,000 both through personal donations and by his efforts as a fund raiser for SOS.

Mrs Rawstone said: SOS has lost two of its most valued and conscientious members and we are all very saddened at the deaths. Our sympathy goes out to their families at this time.'



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OFFERS AND WANTS

ONE Broughton Electric Hand Dryer, little used since its installation eight years ago and now surplus to requirements. Free to any Spastics Society group or unit — or any offer gratefully accepted. Contact Margaret Cresswell, Head of East Anglia Family Help Unit, Shakers Lane, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP32 7BN, phone 0284 3957.

FOR sale, Braune Batri-car, complete hood, wheeled shopper. Today's price £870. Virtually new £700 ono. — Tel Lincoln 50619. All inquiries after November 12.

MICHAEL Churchill is a 20-year-old at the Sunderland Spastics Centre who is looking for a pen friend. Slim and dark haired with blue eyes, Michael enjoys a wide range of sporting activities including swimming, darts and table tennis. He is also a keen supporter of Sunderland football team, never missing a match and plays both football and cricket at the centre. Michael cannot use his left hand but can get around. His address is 58 Gravesend Road, Grindon, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear.

EVEREST and Jennings Limited, of Corby, Northants, announces that its self-propelled wheelchairs are now available on prescription from the Department of Health and Social Security for cases of special need. The manufacturing facility in Corby has been doubled in size and John Parkins, Sales Manager, heads up the Marketing Division.

Awards for Society's work centres

Bright ideas to boost production

TEN Spastics Society work centres entered in this year's competition for the best working idea, and the first prize, worth £500, went to Abbots Langley work centre for its adaptation of a carton assembly system. The second prize, worth 300, was awarded to Crewe work centre which devised a ring for labelling tubes enabling the job to be done by one-handed workers. The third prize of £200 was won by Plymouth work centre for a powder filling machine.

The Production Engineering

Research Association offered a special prize of a place on any of its five-day residential courses, which will be taken up by the manager of the Sully work centre, where the workers planned their own store system.

The Stafford Miller Organisation awarded the Pinner work centre £100 for the shop which is run in the centre by the workers themselves.

The formal presentation of the Industries Award took place at Abbots Langley work centre on Friday, October 19, when Marilyn Allen from the BBC 'Does he take sugar?' programme was present, recording interviews for a programme on October 27.



TERRY Pope, manager of the Abbots Langley Work Centre, holds the Industries Award to Work Centres, the judging of which took place at Castle Priory Col-

lege, at the work centre managers' conference.

Pictured above, left to right, are: Mike Loseby, the Society's work centres liaison officer, Leslie

Groves of the Production Engineering Research Association, Terry Pope and Richard Gray, the Society's Controller of schools and centres.



How Penny got plastered...

A PLASTERED Penny Griffith, senior regional officer for The Spastics Society's Region, puts her fundraising foot forward for fellow parachutists to autograph. But even a broken ankle, the result of her parachute jump the day before, didn't stop Penny from turning up—on crutches of course—at her regional conference.

The sponsored parachute jump, led by Peter Chambers, publican of the Six Bells, Newdigate, Surrey, raised £2,500 for a new minibus for the SE Surrey Spastics Group. The new minibus has already taken a group of children on a holiday weekend.

Ten people, including Penny, none of whom had ever parachuted before, took part in the jump after undergoing rigorous training at the Peterborough Parachute Centre.

'I was the only one to land right on target,'

says Penny. 'I was also the only one to break an ankle.'

'But it was a mindblowing experience — the serenity and quietness. It was a clear, sunny, windless day and you could see for miles. The time it takes from leaving the plane to touching the ground is under two minutes — a few wonderful seconds of floating downwards through silent, still, sunny air with the world below you.'

Penny followed the rules for landing — legs slightly bent, knees, ankles and feet together. But somehow, as she put it, 'the ground beat me to it.' Nevertheless Penny got up on to one leg to wave the OK signal, and even managed to hop some of the distance back to base before a car picked her up and took her to Peterborough Hospital to diagnose two breaks and a twisted knee.

Says Penny: 'It was worth every minute of it, muscle and bone. I can't wait to do it again.'

Picture by West Sussex County Times

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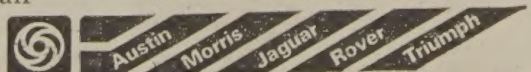
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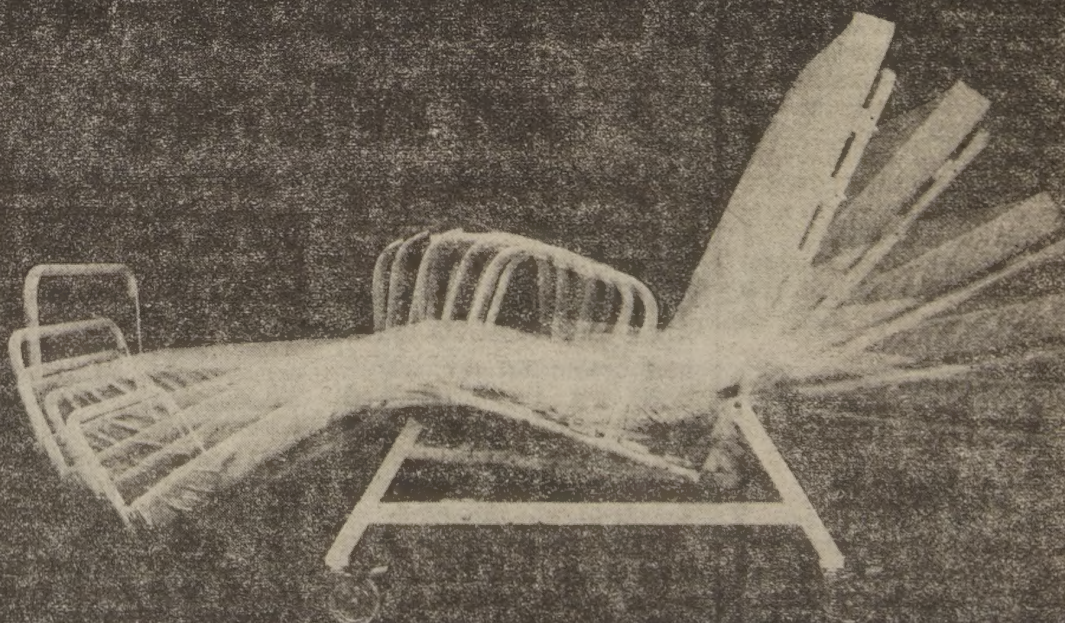
See our cars on Stand No. 118 at Naidex '79

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Spending cuts bite

Continued from Page 1

Gathering intelligence is the first step in formulating alternative strategies.

'We want to know more about how the cuts are affecting cerebral palsied people, so that we can help local groups take appropriate action,' says Mr Tony Frank, the Society's Assistant Director, Regions.

Already trainees at Sherrards Industrial Training Centre at Welwyn, Herts, have been deprived of facilities for swimming because the county council has stopped heating the school pool which they used to borrow. And spastic children are being prevented from attending the Phoenix Centre at Farnborough Hospital because there are no ambulances available to transport them. The centre is run by Bromley area health authority but because the children receive a mixture of teaching and physiotherapy, they are not classed as a priority by the ambulance service and the education department will not accept responsibility for their transport.

These are the typical every day examples of how the cuts are beginning to bite. The cumulative effect is immeasurable on the quality of life for handicapped people, including children.

The Spastics Society, through the senior regional officers, wants to monitor any reduction in facilities or services, and it is only with this information available that advice can be given on effective action.

So 'help us to help you' is the message to local groups, according to Tony Frank and there is no time to waste if discussions with local authorities are to begin before decisions regarding priorities are made.

Queen to see work of volunteers

THE Queen will open a unique one day exhibition, 'Voluntary Organisations into the 80's,' on November 20 at the Royal Horticultural Society's Old Hall, Vincent Square, London SW1.

The Home Secretary, Mr William Whitelaw, will also visit the exhibition later in the day and deliver his first major speech to voluntary organisations.

The object of the exhibition, which is organised by the national Council of Social Service, is to demonstrate to the public the contribution that voluntary organisations make in this country. The Spastics Society will be one of the leading charities taking a stand at the fair and not only will there be a wide variety of literature and other material on display, but the Society will be showing films as well.

Spastics News at Naidex

● Spastics News advertising representative, Renee McNeill is gallantly taking to the floor in a wheelchair, handing out copies of our paper to Naidex visitors. 'I want as many people as possible to see Spastics News and this way I can carry plenty of copies,' explained Mrs McNeill, who is in her 70s.

Every pilgrim to Rome dreams of meeting the Pope—sometimes the dream comes true...



THE dream becomes a reality for five residents from Spastics Society centres, and the camera catches the loving regard of Pope John Paul II for handicapped people.

When the Pope greeted these three residents from Coombe Farm in Croydon (picture right), those few precious unforgettable moments in St Peter's Square, Rome, made the memory of a lifetime.

The emotion was almost too much for Alice Maddocks as Pope John Paul leant forward to touch the cheek of her fiancé Peter Dubouis, while Vincent Humphries looks on. Alice, Peter and Vincent made the Pope a present of a canework tray made by themselves at Coombe Farm.

Also in St Peter's Square, the Pope had a very special message for Pamela Shanley and Adele Strong from Drummonds, pictured left.

'Tell all the handicapped people in England to pray for me because we pray for them every day,' were his words, spoken in English to Pamela and Adele who have been close friends at Drummonds for 21 years. The trip was a celebration of their long friendship over the years,



although Adele only severely handicapped became a Catholic last year. The pilgrimages for people are made possible by the Jumbulances provided by the Across Trust.

Tragedy of baby deaths

Continued from Page 1

Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, intensive care nursery. Her twin brother, Stewart, was not so fortunate. When he desperately needed intensive care to keep him breathing, there was, literally, no room at the inn, and Stewart died.

Says Mr James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, 'This situation is desperate and frightening. For 18 months, the Society has been waging a battle to improve maternity services and to save babies from needless death or handicap. Sufficient intensive care facilities for newborn infants is a sure way of doing this and it also makes economic sense. Caring for one severely handicapped person from the age

of 16 to 65 costs at least £250,000, whereas, it costs £200,000 a year to run paediatric services in a large maternity hospital.

'If only one child a year is saved from severe handicap, the whole paediatric costs are justified. In the present climate of public spending cuts, the government could do well to examine their priorities and to practise cost effective spending.

'How much longer will we continue to allow the tragic and unnecessary loss of Britain's babies before the government and health authorities put money into saving lives?'

Discrimination—are you suffering?

IF you feel you are being discriminated against because you are disabled CORAD wants to hear from you. CORAD is the new committee on restrictions against disabled people which has grown out of the Silver Jubilee Committee on improving access for the disabled.

CORAD's chairman is Peter Large and he is now asking people to contact him with their views and comments particularly if they themselves are disabled. He defines discrimination as 'The unjustified withholding, whether intentional or not, of some service, facility or opportunity from a disabled person because of that person's disability.'

Other fields of discrimination are education and employment but, in addition, CORAD is interested in hearing of other possible areas such as the sale or letting of property, insurance, the membership of organisations, and publications either indicating or advocating discrimination.

A comprehensive questionnaire has been produced covering the field of discrimination which can be obtained from CORAD, Department of Health and Social Security, Alexander Fleming House, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6BY.

Two thousand copies of the questionnaire are being distributed throughout The Spastics Society. CORAD needs to have all the relevant details by January 31, 1980, at the latest.

Firm helps women workers in 'Care Before Birth' scheme

SAFE delivery of a sound product—that's one of the aims of industry for one go-ahead Scottish company as far as its pregnant employees are concerned.

Women who work for the Strathleven Bonded Warehouses during their pregnancy are to participate in a special Care Before Birth programme, as well as getting a free pint per day, as part of a pilot project involving The Spastics Society and the Argyll and Clyde Health Board.

Dumbarton, where the two Strathleven company plants are situated, is a 'black' area, with higher than the national average number of babies dying between the 28th week of pregnancy and the first week of life. According to

the Area Health Board one of the main reasons for this high rate of perinatal mortality is that local women do not make full use of the ante-natal facilities available.

The Spastics Society film 'Feeling Special', which highlighted what is wrong with ante-natal clinics, showed that clinics all over Britain tend to pose problems for pregnant women, such as inconvenient hours, long waiting times, lack of creche facilities and transport difficulties, all of which are obviously specially relevant where working women are concerned.

The Strathleven Bonded Warehouses agreed to co-operate with The Spastics Society and the Area Health Board in a programme of educating ALL its female employees on the importance of Care Before Birth, with particu-

lar attention to nutrition, protection against German measles, smoking, etc. Information will be passed on by means of leaflets, posters and a lecture/film show.

Incentives for pregnant employees include: paid time off for antenatal visits either to a woman's own GP or to the hospital. Mothers-to-be can clock off five minutes early to avoid the crush and they will also receive a free pint of milk a day.

Female employees will be encouraged to inform the plant nurse of their pregnancy and confidentiality is guaranteed. Meantime they will receive information about their State maternity entitlement, an explanation and time-table of their pregnancy, plus a simple explanation of medical terms.

Sharper teeth for Act?

A NEW Bill which could give added strength to the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 is to receive its second reading in the House on Friday, November 30. The Bill, which will be introduced by Mr Stanley Orme, MP, who won 13th place in the Private Members' ballot, is a revival of an earlier Bill introduced by

Mr Eddie Wainwright, MP, last February just prior to the General Election.

Stanley Orme's Bill would give more teeth to Section 2 of the Act which is concerned with the actual provision of items and services, as well as with access. Considerable concern has been felt for some time that Section 2 was not enforceable in the courts.

SPASTICS NEWS

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